

# migrantvoice

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## A declaration in spirit to celebrate Harmony Day

*Mayor Greg Williamson surrounded by members of the Filipino and Chinese communities with the signed Refugee Welcome Zone declaration.*

*Harmony Day, celebrated on Wednesday, March 21, is all about embracing and celebrating our cultural diversity under the banner of "everyone belongs". This Harmony Day, Mayor Greg Williamson, accompanied by several other councillors, truly embraced diversity with the signing of the Refugee Welcome Zone. The declaration is a commitment in spirit to the welcoming of refugees into our community, upholding their human rights, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in our community. The signing took place at a Harmony Day gathering hosted at the Jubilee Community Centre which included performances from the Filipino and Chinese community and the sharing of food and stories.*



**INTERNATIONAL FLAVOURS**  
A Harmony Day Celebration  
George Street Neighbourhood Centre

*Everyone Belongs*  
*#HarmonyDay*

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**Council has an ongoing responsibility to provide communications suitable to the needs of all residents. If you wish to receive information in an alternative format or require an interpreter, contact 1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529).**

## A message from Mayor Greg Williamson

Welcome to the April edition of Migrant Voice for 2018.

This is the only newsletter of its kind in the Mackay region and provides a voice for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. It's also where you will hear about all the events, activities and issues that matter to you.

So far, 2018 has been a busy year full of exciting developments and real growth. It is a tremendous time to be a resident of Mackay. Right now, we are gearing up for some fantastic events – from the Mackay City Auto Group NQ Games over the May Day long weekend to the Greenmount Heritage Fair on May 27 and, of course, the Mackay Mazda Festival of Arts from July 20 to 29. The signature event of the Festival of Arts is always the G&S Wine and Food Day which is a family event with free entry and entertainment. I would recommend it to anyone, especially if you are new to the region or have visiting family or friends in town.

If you are looking to meet new people, gain new skills and involve yourself in the community, I would also strongly recommend the Mackay Regional Volunteer Expo held at the Mackay Senior Citizens Centre on June 10 from 10am. This event attracts more than 50 volunteer organisations and is the perfect place to find a role that suits you and also benefits the community. There really is something for everyone - whether you want something indoors, outdoors, working with people, animals or nature.

I hope to see you there, and I hope you enjoy this edition of Migrant Voice.

Kind regards,  
Mayor Greg Williamson

## International Women's Day

**March 8 is the day the world stops to recognise and celebrate women's achievements throughout history. International Women's Day is a globally recognised day of celebration which promotes a call-to-action to progress gender equality. In Queensland, International Women's Day falls within a wider week of celebrations as part of Queensland Women's Week.**

This year saw a suite of events hosted across the week, including the Zonta Club of Mackay, in partnership with Mackay Regional Council, International Women's Day luncheon. The luncheon, held annually, saw over 270 guests gather at the MECC to feast on a smorgasbord of events and food for the mind and stomach. This year's luncheon included a community marketplace with local service information stalls and market stalls on hand to meet the interests of participants and a local panel of speaker's discussing topical health



*Panel speakers from the International Women's Day Luncheon at the MECC.*

and wellbeing priorities for our local community. In addition to local activity, a simulcast from the annual All About Women forum live from the Sydney Opera House entertained guests during lunch service with the topic "Women in the Age of Trump".

Across the region various events were held to recognise and celebrate local women and the role that they play in creating a harmonious, safe and inclusive community.

## Romance leading to CQUni study all meant to 'Bee'



**It never occurred to Robert Hayman that he would find the woman of his dreams while on holidays in Phuket – but that's exactly what happened. In February 2014, Thai local Sirikorn (nicknamed Bee) and her nine-year-old son Phanuwat captured Robert's heart - 18 months later the couple tied the knot.**

Now living in Mackay with hubby 'Bob', Bee is enjoying studying at CQUni, and son Phanuwat is attending Victoria Park State School. Bob said he instantly fell in love with Bee's smile. "Bee's friend Noy is married to my friend Paul, who I was in Phuket to visit," he explained. "On my holiday, Bee helped me find some authentic Thai restaurants and I fell in love with her smile, her honesty, kindness and friendliness - Bee has a wonderful heart."

Bee admitted she was initially nervous about moving all the way from Sukhothai Province to Mackay. "I followed my heart and I'm glad I did. We are so happy here," she said. "Mackay is a beautiful city, and much quieter than Phuket. Everyone has been kind to me here, especially my tutor Helen Pickering," Bee said. With a passion for people, Bee has a dream to one day gain employment in office work or in childcare. "I like coming to class to learn and I've also made a lot of new friends."

*Did you know CQU's Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) provides up to 510 hours of free English language tuition to eligible migrants?*

**Contact your local AMEP team on 4940 3414 or 4940 3472 or email [amep.mackay@cqu.edu.au](mailto:amep.mackay@cqu.edu.au)**

# Mackay and District Italian Association kick off the year!

## The Mackay and District Italian Association have kicked off 2018 in a very energetic way!

On February 18 MDIA held its Annual General Meeting at the Mackay Children's Support Program on Shakespeare Street where a number of Board positions were taken by new members. A new President Carmel Baretta, who takes the role from the past President Aldo Rover, was elected alongside a new Vice-President Lui Rosati and a new Media Coordinator. The position of Younger Vice-President has been held by the same member Daniele Dallari who has demonstrated excellent organisational skills.

This year the Association will achieve a mile stone in its history, the publication of a collection of stories about hundreds of Italian families in the Mackay District and their contribution to the local community. The book is a huge step towards the main goal of the MDIA which is to rekindle the interest in the



MDIA board members.

Italian culture.

Thanks to the contribution of the younger members, the MDIA for the 2nd year in a row will host the Italian Street Party on April 14. MDIA still sponsors the Italian radio show MaCheDici with Luana and Diego on 4CRM. Moreover, the latest news is that the Italians have decided to change their annual friendly

get together from a sausage sizzle to a "pasta a pranzo" style for a full pasta lunch in perfect Italian tradition.

**Visit [www.mackayitalian.com](http://www.mackayitalian.com) for updates on the Italian Association events!**

## Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women

**On Friday, March 23, a new program – Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women – launched in Mackay.**

The program is funded to November 30, 2019 by the Australian Government's Department of Social Services with the objective of helping CALD women living in Mackay that are experiencing, or at risk of, family and domestic violence or sexual assault, to access the support that they need. The program aims to identify and reduce any barriers to accessing support services for CALD women.

This program is to complement and support work with existing systems and not to duplicate existing activities. The Safer Pathways for CALD Women program is working in partnership with



Some of the drivers behind the new program, left to right: Georgine Crawford, Sumi Hughes, Lyn Barbeler, Anne Butcher, MP Julieanne Gilbert, Valeriya Edsall.

DVRS and Mackay Women's Centre. It aims at educating CALD women about what Domestic and Family Violence is and that DVRS and Mackay Women's Centre is a safe place where women can be safe and get the support that they need.

### What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is when one person in a relationship uses violent or abusive behaviour to control another.

Some effects that living in domestic violence can have:

- emotional distress
- reduced quality of life

- feelings of fear and terror of the partner
- feelings of helplessness and being trapped in a situation
- social isolation
- feelings of shame or embarrassment
- loss of self-esteem and confidence
- confusion and disorientation
- high levels of stress and anxiety
- high incidence of depression

**For any further information, please contact Shakespeare Child and Family Centre on (07) 4957 7222 or via email: [admin@georgestreetnc.org.au](mailto:admin@georgestreetnc.org.au)**

## Events and Services:

### IELTS Tuition

**When:** Every Thursday

10am-12pm Reading and Listening

6-8pm Writing and Speaking

**Where:** Mackay Baptist Church

(Cnr Shakespeare & Brisbane Street)

**Info:** Targeted at migrant women, sessions cost \$10 (*if cost is a barrier please call*).

Contact Conchi on 0403 316 010

### United Women's Cultural Group Craft Mornings

**When:** Every Monday 9am - 12pm

**Where:** ATSIHCS, 31 Victoria St Mackay

**Info:** Newcomers of all ages / cultural backgrounds welcome. \$2 per week. Bring a plate of food to share.

Call Leslie 0413 438 779

### Italian Association Chat & Coffee

**When:** 5:30pm 2nd Friday of every month.

**Where:** Coco Cubano, Wood Street.

Practice your language skills in a relaxed environment over a cuppa. All levels of Italian welcome.

### 4CRM Multicultural Radio Shows

Hosted by local community members

Listen by tuning in to 107.5FM or online at [4crm.com.au](http://4crm.com.au)

Tuesdays 6-7pm – Bonsoir Mackay (French)

Tuesdays 7-8pm - Radio Filipino

Saturdays 11am–12pm MaCheDici (Italian)

Sundays 6-7pm – Fiji Hour



### Global Grooves Festival

Planning for this year's Global Grooves Festival, in October, has already begun. Cultural groups and food vendors are encouraged to start thinking about their applications now. Follow the Mackay Festival Facebook page for the latest news on this multicultural festival.

## Helpful Links

For a full list of local Migration Agents and English Language Services visit the Settling in Mackay page at [www.mackay.qld.gov.au](http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au) - or phone council's Multicultural Community Development Officer on 4961 9655.

## What's on at George Street Neighbourhood Centre?



### Multicultural Community Program:

CAMS Multicultural Community Program (MCP) creates opportunities for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to connect with the local community. The Program covers a wide catchment area between Bowen and Dysart and is delivered by the George Street Neighbourhood Centre.

There are four main activities which fall under this Program and allow participants to come together and connect, find friendship, practice or learn English. The Program also hosts annual community events with the aim of connecting participants to the wider Mackay community. The four activities include:

- 1. World Café:** a migrant's support group where activities, projects and information-sessions are created to encourage migrants and provide them tools to step out of their comfort zone.
- 2. Prep-Ready Kids:** a program for migrant/CALD families with children under five that focuses on helping parents help their children develop the skills sets they need for prep school.
- 3. English Conversation Circles:** Free English program delivered by the program coordinator in partnership with the Dudley Denny Library and Arstpace Mackay.
- 4. Migrant Women's Toolkit:** a two-day workshop created to help empower migrant women in cross cultural marriages.

Just recently the program organised and hosted International Flavours, a Harmony Day celebration, where migrants and locals came together and enjoyed cultural entertainment and international dishes (*pictured page 1*). The group also participated in the Mackay Regional Council's Harmony Day gatherings both at the Jubilee Community Centre and at the Dudley Denny City Library.

**George Street Neighbourhood Centre's Migrant Drivers Education program** has concluded for another session with all participants passing their learner theory written test. Over five weeks, participants from China, Fiji and the Philippines undertook 12 hours of training aimed to develop their knowledge of Queensland road rules and safety. They also met with Senior Constable Steve Smith who discussed the role of the Queensland Police Service and participated in a basic car maintenance workshop with Ian Ferrier from North Jacklin Mackay.

**For more information on any of the programs contact George Street Neighbourhood Centre on 4957 7222.**